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art, and Symonds's "Renaissance in Italy" (London, 1875-1877), the first two volumes of which describe the social, political, and literary conditions of this period. While Villari's introduction is more condensed, its outlines are necessarily sharper, no feature of importance is omitted, and it would be difficult to find elsewhere a more admirable *résumé* of the history of the Italian Renaissance.

The introduction is followed by a portion of the first book, which is to contain the biography of Machiavelli from his birth in 1469 to his removal from office by the Medici in 1512. The first volume contains the biography only to the year 1507. An appendix of over a hundred pages contains a large number of inedited documents, among them many autograph letters and reports.

The period of Machiavelli's life here narrated is, like almost all of it, a record of his services to the state, the most interesting consisting of an interminable series of embassies, in which he had all the labor and none of the honor of an ambassador. In this period fall his first legation to France, and the beginning of his connection with Cæsar Borgia, which was to bring such infamy on him. The end of the volume coincides with the institution of the Florentine militia, 1505-1507. We must await the appearance of the second volume (which the author, unfortunately, does not promise very soon) before we can form a clear opinion of the new Machiavelli. Whatever may be the judgment of the author, the reader and the future world will have for the first time all the materials for the formation of an independent opinion, and the means of testing the views of others.

We must not omit, in conclusion, to add that to the author's painstaking researches we owe the valuable and interesting dispatches of Giustinian, the Venetian ambassador at Rome from 1502 to 1505,\* which Villari found in the Venetian archives while collecting the materials for the present work.

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3.—*A Statistical Account of Bengal.* By W. W. HUNTER, LL. D., Director-General of Statistics to the Government of India, etc., etc. London: Trübner & Co. 1875-'77. 8vo, 20 vols.

THIS great and important work is only the first installment of one still greater and more important. The British Government has undertaken to assemble and publish, upon a uniform plan, a body

\* *Dispacci di Antonio Giustinian, Ambasciatore veneto in Roma dal 1502 al 1505. Per la prima volta pubblicati da Pasquale Villari.* Firenze: Successori Le Monnier. 1876. 3 vols., 12mo.

of statistical information respecting its whole immense Asiatic empire, with the further intention that the results won shall be condensed and digested into an Imperial Gazetteer of India. Twenty volumes of such material may seem at first sight a great deal ; but that is only because we realize so little the vast scale of Indian circumstances and interests. Each volume of the present series deals with a region having a population of about three million souls. The series concerns a people both more numerous and more varied in character (as the preface points out) than that of England, Scotland, Ireland, Norway, Holland, Sweden, and Italy, taken together. And Bengal is but one of twelve administrative equals, though the greatest among them. English and feudatory India has been found by a recent census to contain near 250,000,000 inhabitants—a greater number than are to be found in all Europe, if Russia only be excluded. To finish the work on the same scale will, it is evident, require toward a hundred volumes.

Its plan was formed about ten years ago, under an urgency always felt and acknowledged, and in the light of experience derived from more than one costly failure. The extreme importance of detailed and accurate knowledge of the country and its people to the success of administration, especially in the hands of a centralized government, of foreign origin, is too obvious to need pointing out. Where, as in the case of India, the rulers are more intelligent and energetic than the ruled, and wholly well-wishing toward the latter, failure to secure happiness must have its foundation mainly in ignorance of actual conditions and needs. Such ignorance the English have always been fighting against. Great stores of information have been gathered and piled away in the archives, or sent home to England ; but, for want of unity of plan, continuity of management, and promptness of reduction to published form, they have been in no small measure gathered in vain. Now, however, a single bureau of statistics for the whole empire has been constituted, and has been placed under the management of a man whose appointment is equivalent to an assurance of success for the scheme. Dr. Hunter has long been employed in this kind of work in India, and has shown that he possesses a genius for it. His “Annals of Rural Bengal,” first put forth in 1868, made a very marked sensation, attracting to Indian affairs a wider and keener interest than any other work of its class ever inspired ; it was republished and found numerous readers and admirers in this country, and it has reached in England its fifth edition. His “Orissa,” also

(2 vols., 18 —), a similar account of the neighboring province, attained a like success. His series of inquiries, intended to guide the local authorities in the assembling of materials, were sent out in 1869 ; and they were followed up with such persistent and effective energy that only eight years later he was able to lay before the world, complete, the account of the province of which he had been made the special editor, and at the same time to report that for all the other provinces the compilation of results was well in hand, and for some of them already verging toward completion. A few more years will doubtless see the end reached—so far as there is an end to reach : for it is obvious that such a task is never done, and must always, too, be doing over and over.

The district, which is the unit of administration, is made also the unit of statistical description : there are 225 districts in all India, about a quarter of them lying within the limits of the Province of Bengal. In each district, the geography and general aspect are first taken up ; then the population, from the points of view of its ethnological and other divisions (as by religion and caste), its occupations, its material condition, its native administrative institutions, its manners and customs, its distribution in towns and villages, and so on ; next follows all that relates to the production and distribution of wealth, the agriculture and manufactures, the communication and commerce—a division under this head being formed by the natural calamities (including “foreign and absentee landholders”) ; then the administrative history is described, in regard to revenue and expenditure, civil and criminal law, education, etc. ; and meteorological, medical, and sanitary matters close the catalogue. Each volume contains a map, and a good index of the subjects treated ; and the last volume has a general index to the whole series, together with an account of the fisheries and fishes, and of the botany, of the whole province.

It will readily be seen what a mine of varied and valuable materials is here offered to the student of human history ; and a possible false impression as to the mode of presentation derivable from the word “statistical” in the title should be guarded against. The matter has only to a very small extent the aspect of a tabulated array of statistics, like a census report. It is, on the contrary, in great part eminently readable, like Dr. Hunter’s other works. Historical and literary notices abound in it ; it is rich in curious information respecting peculiar races and classes and occupations ; the industries of indigo and jute cultivation, and of the introduced

tea and Peruvian bark, are interestingly described : the temple and worship of Jagannath, the Christianization of the Kols, the remnants of the native system of Sanskrit instruction, and the like, come up for notice in their proper connection.

A uniform and well-considered method of writing proper names has been adopted throughout, and will doubtless help efficiently toward putting an end to the prevailing confusion.

4.—*Poems and Ballads.* By ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. (Second Series.) New York : R. Worthington, 750 Broadway. 1878. 12mo, pp. 296.

MR. SWINBURNE has given sufficient proof of native genius and masterly art in his previous works to make his readers open this new volume with eager anticipation of charming verse as well as of original creation. But, strange to say, the first impression of the book is of its vagueness and obscurity. The language is simple enough, the words are exquisitely put together, and the verse generally flows like music, but it is often hard to tell what it all means. Several of these pieces, such as "Choriambics," "A Song in Season," and "Two Leaders," give at first no idea of what the writer had in his mind, yet there is no obscure word or intricate sentence to puzzle us, but the haze is over the whole poem, and you see as the blind man, men as trees walking ; and you doubt whether the fault is in your eyes or in the landscape. Probably this difficulty in understanding the poet comes from two causes—one from his way of thinking or of failing to think, and the other from his style of expression.

He does not seem to care to think distinctly, but prefers to live in the dreamy region of sentiment and emotion, fancy and reverie. Thus, run through his thrice three "Triads," beginning thus :

"The word of the sun to the sky,  
The word of the wind to the sea,  
The word of the moon to the night,  
What may it be?"

You note that all these various objects look each other in the face without saying what they mean, nor does the poet tell you what they mean, nor does he make it clear why he does not tell you why you can never know :

"Till the secret be secret no more  
In the light of one hour as it flies,  
Be the hour as of suns that expire  
Or suns that rise."